



Dear farmers,

As we approach the shortest day of the year, I'm reflecting on what a difficult year this has been for farmers. So much turmoil, uncertainty and division — and right now I'm thinking of my farmer friends in my home state of Washington dealing with [ongoing historic, catastrophic flooding](#). Farming is stressful enough, even in a good year. I'm proud of Farm Aid's Hotline and the support we have provided to farmers throughout the year, along with our Disaster Relief Granting, helping farmers recover in the aftermath of climate disaster. We are committed to continuing this work in 2026 and beyond.

Save the date! Farmer Listening Session
January 21, 6-8pm ET

What's your story? Farm Aid wants to hear from farmers!

Farm Aid wants to hear from farmers about what they experienced in 2025 and what concerns they have heading into next the 2026 season. Farm Aid

will use the information and stories we hear during this listening session to make sure that our advocacy and policy work is grounded in the needs and experiences of family farmers right now.

Come learn more about Farm Aid's policy and advocacy work, share your story with the Farm Aid community, and hear from farmers around the country about what they're experiencing right now. [Register to attend our Farmer Listening session on January 21, 2026 from 6-8pm EST.](#)

Can't make the session, but still want to share your story? [Fill out Farm Aid's form instead.](#)

— *Caitlin Arnold Stephano, Hotline Program Manager*



Policy Corner

2025 was an eventful and challenging year for farmers and our food system and [farmers are facing challenging economic conditions.](#) The legislative year is winding down, with no major changes to federal policy expected between now and January. In November, as part of the deal that ended the longest government shutdown in U.S. history, Congress [extended the 2018 farm bill for another year.](#) USDA's funding was extended through September 2026, meaning that funding for agriculture will not be part of any negotiations in

another potential shutdown at the end of January.

Secretary Rollins announced last week that an aid package of \$12 billion would be released for farmers in response to tariffs and rising production costs. The aid is reserved primarily for commodity farmers; only \$1 billion will be available for farmers growing specialty crops. No further details on the payment program for specialty crop farmers has been released as of December 17. Meanwhile, applications for the Supplemental Disaster Relief Program Stage 2 (intended for losses experienced during the 2023-2025 crop years) opened on November 24 with a deadline of April 20, 2026. The [SDRP homepage](#) has more information, and USDA has released [several webinars](#) on the program.

– *Hannah Tremblay, Policy and Advocacy Manager*

Distressed Borrowers Assistance Network (DBAN)

DBAN helps farmers, ranchers and foresters who are facing financial distress by providing one-on-one support that is tailored for their unique challenges. Through our network of trained direct service providers, we offer personalized assistance to producers and connect producers with valuable resources to build their financial strength and long-term resilience.

To get support from someone in the DBAN Network, farmers can call the [Farm Aid Hotline](#) at 1-800-FARM-AID or [request assistance online](#). If you would like to learn more about assisting other farmers in your area, please access the DBAN training materials or watch the videos on the [DBAN webpage](#).



New Partner Resources We Love

Have you ever wondered what the best ways to insulate your operation from catastrophe are?

If so, Extension Risk Management Education's publication [Introduction to Risk Management](#) provides a lens into the top risks farms face and how to effectively mitigate them. Although it's 11 years old, the content is still the most comprehensive and timely that we're aware of!

"AgFTAP" (Agricultural Finance, Tax, and Asset Protection) is a national program providing educational resources and tools centered around strategic business planning and farm financial management. These resources are freely accessible via agftap.org and have been developed for producers as well as ag educators. In addition to resources, users can access a network of ag supporters they call Farm Champions, who can provide support and advice in the farm finance space.

From our partners at Organic Farming Research Foundation:

The National Organic Farmer Survey is LIVE! OFRF has launched its [National Organic Farmer Survey](#), which is conducted every few years and aims to understand the challenges, priorities, and needs of organic and transitioning farmers across the country. The survey is open to all certified and in-transition organic farmers and ranchers

nationwide. Upon completion, all farmer respondents will receive a code to Johnny's Selected Seeds and have the opportunity to win other farm-related prizes like boots from The Original Muck Boot Company, FELCO pruners, and a consultation for your farm. If you're a US-based certified organic or transitioning farmer and want to take the survey, [click here to request a survey link](#).

Calling All Farmers and Ranchers in the Plains Region!

We are looking to connect with organic and transitioning farmers in the following states: Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, and Oklahoma. We're hosting 45-minute calls with producers to learn more about your farms and practices, in exchange for a \$100 stipend. Fill out [this form](#) to sign up and receive timely, region-specific resources and opportunities.



Open Grant Opportunities /

Coming Soon

Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)'s Fund A Farmer Grants are now open through January 3rd, 2026. There are two grants available; you are invited to apply for both:

- Fund-a-Farmer Welfare Improvement Grants up to \$3,500 each for farmers looking to improve the lift of their animals, pursuing animal welfare certifications, or aiming to maintain current certifications.
- Fund-a-Farmer Systems Change and Innovation Grant up to \$10,000 for farmers seeking to develop business plans/feasibility studies, install infrastructure for pasture-based operations, adopting alternative livestock breeds, or to develop alternative or cooperative marketing strategies.

Fund-A-Farmer grants are highly competitive; if interested, be sure to start early in order to compose a strong application!

Sky High will award \$350,000 in grants (total) to individuals working in agriculture, food justice, and/or land sovereignty. The average proposal funded in 2025 was \$11,000 with grants ranging from \$1,500 up to \$30,000. Grant proposals should match the scope and capacity of the amount requested. Applicants who requested funding 2025 and did not receive a grant may resubmit applications for consideration. **The 2026 grants application window is now open through January 20, 2026.**

The FruitGuys Community Fund: Applications will start being accepted in December and into January 2026. These grants are up to \$5,000 for farm owners who have long-term land access and have operated for a minimum of two years.

The Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund is a small grant program that provides direct assistance to

veterans who are in their beginning years of farming or ranching. The next grant cycle will open in January 2026.

The Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program

offers competitive [Research and Education grants](#) to farmers, educators, service providers, researchers, nonprofit staff, graduate students and others to address key issues affecting the sustainability of agriculture throughout the NE region. Application due February 2, 2026.

We post grant and funding opportunities on [Threads](#), [Bluesky](#) and [X](#) — follow us to see more.

Check out our Farmer Resource Guides

Our Hotline Team has created [Resource Guides](#) for the many topics we hear about daily on the Hotline – from Farm Stress, Legal Assistance and Disaster Relief – and more! Please check them out and share. [The Guides are also available in Spanish.](#)

Farmer Resource Guides





Farm Aid's Hotline and Farmer Resource Network

Did you know that [Farm Aid's Farmer Hotline](#) has been running since 1985? You can call us at 1-800-FARM-AID, Monday through Friday, 9am-9pm ET (6am-6pm PT). One of our Hotline Team members will answer your call, listen and find you the best resources for your situation. You can also submit an [Online Request for Assistance](#) anytime. Our Spanish Hotline is available Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm ET, and the Spanish Online Request for Assistance can be found [here](#).

Our [Farmer Resource Network](#) is a free online database of national, regional and state resources. We have 23 different service categories to search by — from Farm Stress to Funding Opportunities to Legal Help. The Farmer Resource Network is also [fully accessible in Spanish](#).

**Do you know a farmer friend that
might like to receive these
emails?**

Farmer Resource Newsletter Sign-up

Check out our blog!

Farmers are up against immense challenges right

now. [Check out our latest blog post.](#)

Farm Aid Blog

Farm Aid has a podcast

[*Against the Grain*](#) is Farm Aid's podcast where you'll hear from farmers and artists, advocates and food experts, activists and policymakers – all of whom are working towards building a more just and equitable farm and food system. [Listen to our latest episode.](#)

Farm Aid Podcast



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